

Congratulations to our 2004 Registry Award Winners!

Posted on 1/1/2005

Many thanks to all of the participants in the Registry. NGC appreciates the efforts that have gone into assembling every set. The task to choose five sets in three categories — Best Classic, Best Modern and Best Presented set — was extremely difficult. In fact, choosing just five sets in the Best Presented category was so difficult that we decided to award eight!

Sets are listed in alphabetical order by set name.

Classic Sets

The B. Merritt Collection - Merritt

The series of classic gold commemoratives is a short set, running from just 1903 to 1926, but it includes some very rare coins, indeed. The B. Merritt Collection has them all, including a very rare PF-66 Ultra Cameo example of the 1903 Louisiana Purchase Dollar with Jefferson bust. All of the gold dollars and quarter eagles are in superb condition, the highlight being perhaps the MS-68* example of the 1904 Lewis & Clark Dollar. Both varieties of the 1922 Grant Dollar likewise grade MS-68. Certainly the keys to completing this series are the magnificent fifty-dollar pieces dated 1915-S, and both of the coins in this memorable collection grade an impressive MS-65!

Bob Moreno's MS Walking Liberty Half Collection - Bob Moreno

This coin type is high on everyone's list of favorite designs. The Moreno Collection is certainly one of the finest ever assembled, complete for all issues and with most pieces grading MS-66 or higher. The scarce dates are well represented: 1916-S (MS-66), 1917-S Obverse (MS-65), 1919-D (MS-65) and 1919-S (MS-67!). All three of the very scarce 1921 halves are gem MS-65. Both scarce and common dates are among this collection's memorable condition rarities. These include 1916-D (MS-67), 1927-S (MS-66*), 1937 (MS-68*) and 1941-S (MS-66*). Other coins grading MS-68 include 1934, 1937-D, 1939, 1940, 1943 and 1944-D.

EHG Half Dimes - Gardner

Few collectors attempt to tackle any of the Seated Liberty series in their entirety, and fewer still manage to complete one at the Mint State level. This set of Seated

Liberty Half Dimes is simply outstanding. All of the scarce dates are present, including 1838-O (MS-65), 1840-O Drapery (MS-63), 1844-O (MS-65), 1853-O No Arrows (MS-65). The very rare 1846 is an impressive MS-62. Lovely condition rarities are likewise included—1839, 1853 No Arrows, 1856, 1857, 1860, 1862, 1863 and 1872-S—all grading MS-68! Several other issues carry the NGC star (*) for superior eye appeal, making for a truly memorable collection.

Everest Collection of Proof Morgan Dollars - First Strike Society

A perennial favorite, the Morgan Silver Dollar is never prettier than as a gem proof, and this collection abounds in outstanding examples. Complete for all dates, only the extremely rare 1878 Reverse of '79 is lacking. Some of the finest coins in this wonderful set are PF-68* Ultra Cameo examples of 1896, 1898 and 1900. Other important condition rarities include 1878 8TF (PF-67 Cameo), 1894 (PF-67 Ultra Cameo) and 1901 (PF-68 Cameo). The key date 1895 is an extremely desirable PF-67* Ultra Cameo! The rare Zerbe and Chapman proofs of 1921 grade PF-66 and PF-67, respectively, the latter being one of the great rarities of American numismatics.

Gerald Forsythe MS Buffalo Nickel Collection 1913-1938 - Forsythe

Buffalo Nickels are attractive coins at any grade in the Mint State range, but how often do you see a complete collection of this series in which most of the coins grade MS-66 or higher? Some of the outstanding condition rarities include 1913 T1, 1914-S, 1919 and 1926, all in MS-68. The key dates are in superb grades, too. At the MS-67 level are such tough coins as 1914-D and 1916-S, while rarities such as 1913-S T2, 1915-S, 1918-D, 1921-S, 1926-S and 1937-D 3-legged are represented by wonderful MS-66 examples. The very rare 1916 DDO and 1918/7-D varieties are present with MS-63 and MS-65 pieces, respectively.

Modern Sets

Eric Pacheco Cameo Cent Collection - Pacheco

Lincoln Cents are a perennial favorite with collectors, and the proofs since 1950 offer an unbroken series of dates. Perhaps this set should be called the Ultra Cameo Collection, as this describes all but four of the cents in this collection. Three of the Cameo pieces are the SMS cents of 1965-67, which are exceedingly rare in Ultra Cameo. Highlights of this splendid collection include 1950 (PF-67RD Ultra Cameo), 1953 and 1955 (both PF-68RD UC), and 1963 and 1964 (both PF-RD69 UC!). From 1972 onward, these cents are uniformly PF-69RD UC, with the exception of half a dozen awesome PF-70RD UC examples.

Everest Collection of Proof Franklin Halves - First Strike Society

Though encompassing just 14 coins, the Franklin proof series is extremely challenging to complete when one is insistent on high quality pieces. That's a perfect description of this particular collection, in which all but one of these gem proofs is designated Ultra Cameo. With but two exceptions—the scarce 1950 and 1952 dates—all of the coins in this set have a minimum grade of PF-67. Outstanding entries in this set include 1950 (PF-65* UC), 1954 (PF-68 UC), 1955 (PF-68* UC), 1956 (PF-69 UC), 1958 (PF-68* UC) and 1959—notoriously rare in Ultra Cameo—PF-67 UC!

John-Donna's Ultimate Gold Collection - patmack98

Consisting of all the proof edition Gold American Eagles from 1986 to date, complete for all denominations, the number of coins in this collection presents a daunting task to even the most dedicated collector. The quality of this set is simply unimprovable, and it is destined to remain so, as every single coin in this set is certified as PF-70 Ultra Cameo! At this grade level there are a number of very scarce entries, including G\$5 1994-W, 1996-W and 1999-W; G\$10 1993-P; G\$25 1990-P and 1993-P; and G\$50 1997-W and 1998-W.

Mike R. Bianco Memorial Collection - Michael R. Bianco III

The Roosevelt Dime series, though modern, now actually goes back nearly 60 years. This superb set from 1946 through 1964 encompasses all the circulating silver issues. With a minimum grade of MS-67 throughout, the overall quality of this collection is quite impressive. Some highlights include 1946, 1948-S, 1952-S, 1953, 1957 and 1958, all grading MS-68. Perhaps the standout specimen is this set's 1950-D, which grades an incredible MS-68* FT! In fact, no less than seven of the coins in this set carry the coveted star designation for superior eye appeal. Most of the coins are also certified as Full Torch. These include dates usually found mushy, such as 1948-S, 1953-S and 1954-S.

The Renard Collection - Rick Renard

In this complete set of Modern USA Commemoratives the sheer number of coins required for completion is staggering. The uniformly high quality of this set is likewise almost unimaginable, with nearly all of the Mint State coins grading MS-70 and a perfect, uninterrupted run of proofs grading the ultimate PF-70 Ultra Cameo. With the quality of this set essentially unimprovable, the best thing to do is list some of the rarest pieces in high grades: 1982-D Washington 50c (MS-69), 1989-D Congress 50c (MS-69), 1992-S Olympics S\$1 (PF-70 UC), 1994-P Vietnam S\$1 (PF-70 UC), 1996-S Olympics 50c (PF-70 UC), 2000-P Leif Ericson S\$1 (PF-70 UC) and 2001-P Capitol 50c (PF-70 UC).

Best Presented Sets

Cardinal Collection - cardinal

A winner in 2003 with his variety set of early dollars, Cardinal is back with another early dollars set. Some pieces will be remembered from his 2003 set but with updated commentary, this set is fresh and interesting.

The Gerry Fortin Collection of Liberty Seated Dimes - Gerry Fortin

Descriptions like these do more than create an appreciation for the collection and the coins, they deliver a wealth of information about the history of the minting of the coins. When 18 years of collecting experience get spread out in detail in a collection's descriptions, you can't help but to sit up and take notice.

The Gregg Bingham Type Set - Bingham

What's better than a set as pretty as this? An owner that appreciates the greatness of each and every piece. Awesome photos of gorgeous coins!

Hoot's "Classic" Jeffs '38-'64 - Hoot

This winning set from 2003 has seen some changes in the last year. The addition of coins to the set are accompanied by new descriptions and photos that allow the viewer to really experience the growth of this set and the journey of its owner.

Legend Collection of Mint State Seated Dollars - Tradedollarnut

“A picture is worth a thousand words.” The stunning photographs provide a very real look at this amazing set. This set’s coin descriptions not only provide insight into the in-person quality of the coins, but provide some perspective on the provenance of the coins. The passion of the owner glimmers through the words in many of these coin descriptions.

PROOF WANNABES - Coxe

Superb photography and interesting commentary make this set a sure standout.

Proofbarber's complete set - Proofbarbers

The introduction to this set adds a very personal touch that embodies what is special about the Registry. This set provides the ability to appreciate the coins through photography and commentary but also conveys the owner’s passion for collecting.

Souder 1935 to 1942 Proof Sets - Souder

This collection of 1936 to 1942 Proof sets boasts great photos with solid commentary. Very interesting! The award for this collection is a bit unusual as it actually spans over several sets, but the combined achievement is very worthy of the nod.

Please [click here](#) to see the details of these fantastic sets and also to see our list of #1 sets in every Registry category.

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F.U.N. Show — A Flurry of Activity & a Hot Market

Posted on 1/1/2005

The F.U.N. show proved to be a hurricane-like whirlwind of activity this year, with high attendance, a great mix of dealers, and nearly constant lines at the NGC booth. Dealers and collectors from the cold and snowy parts of the country were greeted with warm weather and a hot coin market.

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The F.U.N. show, which is hosted by the Florida United Numismatist, is always one of the biggest shows of the year. The year the show was held at the Fort Lauderdale Convention Center from Jan 13th through 16th.

"This was probably the busiest F.U.N. show I have ever attended," commented Sarah Martin of NGC. "We were busy talking to dealers and collectors, accepting submissions and handing back show grading submissions nearly non-stop the entire show."

The volume of business is a clear sign that the coin market is still booming. "We saw lots of activity in all areas of the market, from type coins to modern, U.S. and World Coins as well as tokens and medals," says Scott Heller, NGC Director of Operations.

In addition to the brisk business of submissions at the NGC and NCS table, three exhibits proved popular with the collectors and dealers. At the NGC booth attendees could view first hand the BRS Legend Collection of matte proof and satin proof gold dated 1908 to 1915.

The BRS collection was described by most who examined it as "simply amazing," with its 32 proofs of phenomenal quality. Among the highlights from the collection are 1909 and 1910 half eagles grading Proof 67* and the truly remarkable 1912 matte proof double eagle that grades Proof 68*.

Also at the NGC booth was an exhibit of the many types of U.S. and World Coins, tokens and medals that NGC certifies along with the various certification products currently offered by NGC. Along side the single coin holder, visitors could view NGC's Multi-coin holder, GSA certification, Photo Proof and Photo Certificates, and numerous publications including the *Modern Coin Grading Guide* and *VarietyPlus Guide*. Another popular publication at the table was the new "Numismedia Price Guide."

In the exhibit section of the bourse floor, there were quite a few well-presented collections of coins. One of the nicer ones, in our opinion, was a collection of NGC certified Norse American Medals.

For Mark Salzberg, NGC's Chairman, one of the highlights of the show was the remarkable Brasher Doubloons. "Even after all these years in the coin business, you can't help but get excited when you are looking at coins as rare and important as those two doubloons. They are amazing," said Salzberg.

The doubloons were part of "The Gold Rush Collection," which was presented by Heritage Numismatic Auctions. The first specimen was the 1742 dated Lima Style Doubloon "Discovery Specimen" in NGC XS40. The second specimen was the 1787 Brasher Doubloon with "EB" punch on wing in NGC AU55. These two pieces garnered a lot of attention during the auction and subsequently on the bourse floor by local television news media.

Next year the F.U.N. Show, which is held in January will be held at the Orlando Convention Center.

Upcoming shows that NGC will be attending include the invitation only Trade and Grade in Las Vegas and the always busy, Long Beach Coin and Collectibles show held Feb 24th through 27th at the Long Beach Convention Center in California.

NGC will offer on-site grading the first couple of days of the shows. So if you have coins you want graded, we highly recommend arriving early.

For an up-to-date list of the shows that NGC will be attending, visit NGC's online

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NGC Grading Onsite at Long Beach

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NGC will offer Onsite Grading and Encapsulating at The Long Beach Show in Long Beach, California, February 23-25, 2005.

NGC will offer Onsite Grading and Encapsulating at The Long Beach Show in Long Beach, California, February 23-25, 2005. In addition to the \$100 and \$65 Same Day show services normally offered, NGC will also run a \$40 Same Day Gold Special. Please read below for complete details:

\$100 Same Day Special:

\$100 per coin for all coins over \$1500 in value

\$65 Same Day Special:

\$65 per coin for all coins valued at \$1500 or less

\$40 Same Day Gold Show Special:

\$40 per coin for all Gold coins valued at \$1000 or less; 5 coin minimum

Guaranteed delivery (within four hours of submission at shows) may be purchased for \$150 per coin under NGC's Expedite Service.

On Tuesday, February 22 submissions for \$100, \$65 and Gold Same Day services will be accepted from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Hyatt and will be processed on Wednesday, February 23. Please contact Customer Service for specific location.

On Wednesday, February 23, submissions will be accepted prior to setup from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Hyatt. In addition, submissions for Same Day services will be accepted during regular show hours on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, February 23-25. Coins for the Gold service will be returned no later

than the close of the show on Friday, February 25.

Please check with NGC show representatives for daily cut-off times.

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NGC News

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The Transitional Cents of 1982

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David Lange



As the Lincoln cent approaches its 100th anniversary in 2009, there is talk of modifying its design to honor the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth that same year. What's really amazing is that the one-cent piece is still being coined at all. Numismatists and economists have been declaring it obsolete for the past 30 years, yet it soldiers on through a combination of lobbying efforts by the zinc industry (posing as "Americans for Common Cents") and simple bureaucratic inertia.

It appeared that the cent was already in crisis during 1973, when the rising price of copper threatened to make the melting of these coins profitable. That never came to pass, but the U.S. Mint did experiment with alternatives to the existing brass composition of 95% copper and 5% zinc. These experiments included two extensive test productions of aluminum cents, as well as a shorter pressrun of cents made from bronze-clad steel. All of these coins were dated 1974, though the test period extended from late 1973 into early 1975. The return of copper's price to its pre-crisis level terminated these experiments, and no changes to the circulating coins were made at that time.

Anticipating that such a problem would arise again, Congress did authorize the Treasury Secretary to make any needed change in the cent's composition without requiring further legislation, a most unusual and broad step. Public Law 93-441 was passed October 11, 1974 but, as we now know, its provisions were not acted upon until several years later.

When the double-digit inflation of the late 1970s and early '80s again drove up the price of copper, it was decided that the cent's composition had to be changed to reduce its copper content. Since the value of the cent was, by then, more

symbolic than real, it was deemed important that the new issue look exactly like the existing cents. This meant that any alternative metal would have to be plated with either pure copper or a high-copper alloy.

The bronze-clad steel cents tested a few years earlier were evidently not satisfactory, so further tests were made during 1980-81. A practical solution was found in a cent planchet that was nearly pure zinc, with just a thin copper plating. In fact, the zinc base was .992 zinc and .008 copper, the trace amount of copper being included to facilitate bonding of the copper plating.

All planchets for the new cents would be fabricated by outside vendors and delivered ready to coin. A contract was awarded July 22, 1981 to the Ball Corporation of Greenville, Tennessee for press-ready planchets to be delivered no later than November. Production of the copper-plated zinc cents was anticipated to begin in December using dies dated 1982. Since the new cents would not be available in large quantities for another several months, the coining of brass cents was expected to continue throughout much of 1982.

Just as the zinc industry today supports the coining of cents using its product, in 1981 the copper producers howled at the prospect of losing their lucrative market. A lawsuit was filed in October of that year by the Copper & Brass Fabricators Council alleging that the Treasury Department lacked the legal authority to change the composition of the "penny," whereupon the District of Columbia's U.S. District Court dismissed the suit on the grounds that the Council lacked the legal authority to sue! This dismissal was later affirmed by the U.S. Court of Appeals and the matter forgotten.

Coining of the zinc cents actually commenced on January 7, 1982 at the West Point Mint. (Little remembered today is that this facility produced nearly a billion cents from 1974 to 1985. As these bear no mintmarks, they are indistinguishable from those made at Philadelphia.) Soon thereafter, Philadelphia undertook this coinage, too. Denver continued to produce solely brass cents until October 21, 1982. That was conversion day. After coining brass cents in the morning, an hour's suspension was affected during which time all the remaining brass cents and planchets were cleared away, and the striking of zinc cents began. The first delivery of these from the Coining Division was made on the 27th. The San Francisco Mint struck nearly four million proof cents for collectors, but these were all of the traditional composition. It was found that the underlying zinc broke through its thin copper plating under the repeated impressions given to proof coins. This problem was solved in 1983 and subsequent years by furnishing each proof planchet with a second copper plating. Oddly enough, San Francisco did mint 1,587,245 zinc cents for general circulation in 1982. Like those made at West

Point, however, these bear no mintmarks.

The coin hobby enjoyed a real windfall when the U.S. Mint decided to make a major revision to the cent's obverse master hub midway through 1982. The new hub is most easily recognized by its much smaller date, and these Small Date cents were first struck September 3. Ultimately, a total of seven different combinations of date size, mint and composition were created for the circulating cent coinage in 1982, only a 1982-D Small Date Brass cent being omitted. When one adds the 1982-S Large Date Brass proof cent to this mix, the result is a most memorable year for collectors.

David W. Lange's column "USA Coin Album" appears monthly in Numismatist, the official publication of the American Numismatic Association.

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